

Announcement of Chicago Ten-Year Plan

Chicago, Illinois – January 21, 2003

Remarks by Philip Mangano

Thank you, Mayor Daley.

In the last few days “Chicago,” the movie musical, received a handful of Golden Globe nominations.

Today, Chicago, the caring **city**, is declared a winner.

Not for theatrics. But for common sense.

Not for show. But for a plan.

Not for a director. But for a direction.

And not for stars. But for all of us, especially our poorest neighbors.

Congratulations! The ballots are counted, the plan is a winner!

I bring you and your city greetings from the White House today and from the Chairperson of the Interagency Council, Secretary Mel Martinez. And I can assure you that both are encouraged by the action taken here in Chicago this morning.

As you know, President Bush called for a ten-year initiative to end chronic homelessness in his budget message and Secretary Martinez has repeated that call numerous times as have other Cabinet Secretaries in this Administration.

You also know I'm from Boston. I was born an abolitionist. It's in the genes. You see a social wrong, you want to right it. You see a social evil, you want to end it.

In your ten-year plan, you continue the rich legacy of abolitionism in this country and in this city.

And the plan itself? It's a national model.

Ideas from all over the country – ideas that work are in this plan.

Aligned with our national themes,

Infused with results oriented strategies,

And now **endorsed** by the Mayor of the nation's third largest city – you can be certain that this plan is now part of the national and federal dialogue.

Our evolving federal strategy is a loose-leaf notebook. If something is not working, out it comes. If something promises results and accountability, in it goes. This plan is an initial entry.

In fact, I'd like to take this occasion to invite Mayor Daley to our next Interagency Council meeting at the White House in mid-March to unveil this plan directly to the Council's twenty federal departments and agencies.

Here's a plan promoting partnership, not requiring partisanship.

Here's a strategy focused on planning, not posturing;

on solving, not managing;

on preventing, not apologizing;

on ending, not accommodating;

on "getting housed, staying housed."

That's a plan.

The realism of the plan makes it doable. This plan is **not** constituted around anecdote and conjecture. It is constellated around research

and demonstrated results. Some here in Chicago. Some elsewhere. Who says we can't claim the best ideas no matter their origin? It's called "replication."

The plan is plainspoken. Realistic. Strategic. And short.

What does the plan call for? What should all plans call for? What do homeless people require?

Results and accountability.

A new standard of expectation. Not just managing or maintaining or accommodating homelessness. No. This plan calls for visible, measurable, quantifiable change on the streets of your city, in the shadows of your shelters, in the life of your neighborhoods, and, most importantly, in the lives of your homeless neighbors.

We have an evolving partnership and I am here today to assure you of continued encouragement and support from Washington. That support can come in direct funding as it did recently in Emergency

Shelter funds and Continuum of Care support at 8-year record levels.

Or possible support in the new \$35 million chronic homelessness initiative targeted to our nation's streets. Or in identification and support of new research and new technologies that promise the results we seek – reduced homelessness.

Whichever, **your** goal is **our** goal – ending homelessness.

No doubt, some will think the Mayor has gone too far in endorsing the Plan. They will say that he has gone way out on a limb with his endorsement.

I disagree. He's not out on a limb. He's at the roots. The roots of the problem. The roots of homelessness.

With a focus on both **intervention** – what resources are needed for those already homeless, especially housing – and on **prevention** – how do we stop a person from becoming homeless in the first place – this plan strikes at the roots of homelessness to uproot it.

This Mayor did not have to sign.

His administration did not have to stop.

Like in the story of the Samaritan of old, they could have been among those who walked on by. And left it for others. For the state. The feds. The providers.

But instead, this city has stopped and offered assistance. And asked all to stop and help.

In other places, some governments have walked by, averting their eyes from the gathering humanity. Some, dusting off 19th century vagrancy laws to hide the disgrace for 30 or 60 or 90 days. But Chicago has stopped, not to be punitive, but to be proactive.

Thirty-five years ago here in Chicago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addressed this very story. He tells us that the Samaritan came by and stopped and asked the question – “What will happen to this man or woman or child if I do not stop to help him?” Dr. King tells us that’s why the Samaritan was good and great. He didn’t ask what will

happen to **me**, but what will happen to this person, this family. The Samaritan is great because he was willing to take a risk for humanity.

In the last few days we've heard a lot about having a dream as Dr. King did. Well, there are some of us in this audience today who have shared a dream. The dream that someday soon no American will need to be on the streets, that no American family will need to be in a shelter. That no American veteran will be homeless.

And here today, in Chicago, that dream begins to become a reality for every child, woman and man in this great city.

And so to all of you here in Chicago and elsewhere who have contributed to this vision – to Commissioner Vasquez, Jean Buntzen, Arturo Bendixen – to the National Alliance to End Homelessness for providing a ten year planning template; to the President and Secretary Martinez, who made a ten year plan federal policy; to the advocates, providers, and partners of the Chicago Continuum of Care for tireless work in creating and negotiating this plan; and, today, most especially to the Administration of Mayor Daley for endorsing a

vision that embraces every citizen of the city. Ensuring that no one will be forgotten or left behind. That everyone will be known by a single name – neighbor – and treated as one.

Thank you.